

Amesbury Municipal Council Workshop
July 8, 2009
Senior Center
6:30 pm

Members present: Councilor Roger Benson, Councilor Mary Chatigny, Councilor Anne Ferguson, Councilor Robert Gilday, Councilor Robert Lavoie, Councilor Joseph McMilleon, Councilor Allen Neale. Councilor Sherwood and Councilor Dunford were unable to attend.

Also present: Mayor Thatcher Kezer, Kendra Amaral, Chief of Staff Bonnijo Kitchin, Town Clerk

Councilor Chatigny led the workshop with a slide show and power point presentation on Appreciative Inquiry and the process for creating effective communication.

The slide show and presentation led to a discussion which centered around, why, how, what decisions are being made and how to effectively communicate these decisions to each other and the general public.

The group discussed many of the challenges of balancing the daily operations of running the City and effectively communicating with each other and the public to the best interest of all. Transparency was discussed in great detail and there was a commitment by the group to make some changes in communicating more effectively with each other and the general public.

There was a discussion on making improvements to the meeting agenda in order to help the public be more informed about the process and the business before the Municipal Council. Some of the changes include the addition of a summary of each item, the date, time and place of the next subcommittee meetings and next council meetings. It was also recommended that more dialogue take place at the Municipal Council meetings as to what was discussed in subcommittee and how the committee came to their recommendations. Ms. Amaral stated she would send a memo to department heads requesting the summary be added to all requests sent to the Mayor.

Councilor Lavoie asked before the Council adjourned if he could suggest meeting in August for the zoning issue before the Planning Board rather than wait until September. It was discussed and Councilor Benson requested the meeting be posted for July 28th after the finance committee meeting. It was agreed so that they could take August off.

Workshop adjourned at 9:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnijo Kitchin, CMMC
Town Clerk